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SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/PPC, WHA/AND, AND G/TIP

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SUBJECT: NOVEMBER TIP UPDATE

REF: A. QUITO 2773

B. QUITO 3027

1. Summary: This cable reports significant anti-TIP developments since our interim TIP report (Ref A). USAID and Geneva Global will mount six new projects to combat TIP (Trafficking in Persons) by the end of the year. We recently met with two organizations who provide services to children and are interested in adapting their programs to help TIP victims. The director of the Ricky Martin Foundation met with government officials to promote anti-TIP television broadcasts. The police continued stepping up TIP efforts by conducting 64 raids on nightclubs and bars from October 28 - November 11 reuniting 54 minors with their families. End Summary.

Progress on Victims Services

2. USAID and Geneva Global will provide \$600,000 to fund 12 to 15 projects to address TIP issues in Ecuador. Geneva Global held a conference on November 15 with 38 NGOs to solicit proposals for projects. The organization will coordinate with the Embassy to choose proposals that target Ecuador's needs and will choose six projects by the end of the year. The remaining projects will be chosen by March 2005. We met with Geneva Global on November 16 to coordinate and explain our priorities: shelters, psychological services, and alternative job training for victims.

3. PolOff and AIDOff recently met with two potential providers of victims services: Street Children and the San Jose Foundation. The former organization is faith-based and runs a shelter for 12 to 15 boys; provides food, education, and before- and after-school activities to many more children; and has victims centers in seven cities. The San Jose foundation is largely funded by the municipality of Quito with some support from local businesses. It will open a transitory shelter in January 2005 that will house 60 people of all ages and currently runs programs to assist victims of child labor. The foundation runs a shelter for beggars and impoverished senior citizens. The directors of both organizations were interested in providing services to TIP victims but need assistance tailoring their programs to meet the needs of TIP victims. PolOff will work with AID to see what assistance we can provide, and we put both organizations in contact with Geneva Global.

Ricky Martin Foundation

4. Angel Saltos, executive director of the Ricky Martin Foundation (RMF), met with the DCM, PolOff, AIDOff, and IO on November 19 to explain RMF's interest in combating TIP in Ecuador. Saltos and PolOff met with the National Committee on Women and the police on November 22 to encourage further cooperation on combating trafficking. The RMF's People for Children works to prevent TIP and assist victims, particularly children. The MFA is trying to get free airtime for Ricky Martin's public service announcements (PSA) against trafficking. These spots have already aired on one television channel in Quito in August during the noon news. Saltos said that one of the PSAs was aired in Ecuador on October 10 in a UNICEF telethon. He also recorded a 10-minute radio interview that PAS will distribute to 60 radio stations and did a radio interview with Radio Quito to raise awareness of TIP and its consequences.

New Minister of Government

5. The DCM and PolChief met with the new Minister of Government, Jaime Damerval, on November 15 (Ref B). They encouraged him to appoint someone soon to cover TIP and call a meeting of the Interagency TIP Commission he heads. Damerval was more focused on other concerns, such as political reforms but said he would personally lobby Congress to pass pending anti-TIP legislation.

Sixty-Four Raids in the Last Two Weeks

16. From October 28 - November 11, DINAPEN conducted 64 raids of nightclubs and bars and found 55 minors who may have been involved in prostitution. With the exception of one minor who was taken into protective custody, all victims were handed over to family members. We are requesting additional information on the activities of the potential TIP victims.

News from the Office of the Presidency

17. PolOff met with Carlos Larrea, the President's legal advisor and secretary of the Interagency TIP Commission, on November 24. He said he would lobby in favor of the bill and was trying to build a coalition. However due to Congress' coming recess, he expects no further progress will be made on the legislation until mid-January. Larrea said he would ask all committee members to provide him with a report on their progress and will continue to press MinGov Damerval to appoint someone to cover TIP.

Comment

18. We will work with organizations, such as Geneva Global and the Ricky Martin Foundation, to develop public-private partnerships to combat TIP and help victims. We have encouraged the GOE and local NGOs to work with these foundations and will consider them for USG matching funds. The MFA is taking steps in the right direction by working to air the anti-trafficking videos. Larrea is emerging as a key supporter and TIP ally while the new Government Minister assembles his team. We will continue promote GOE coordination with NGO's, and urge Congress to take up TIP reforms.

KENNEY